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Advancement of women

Barbados, Belize, Benin, Dominica, Ethiopia, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Mongolia, Saint Lucia and Suriname: revised draft resolution

Situation of older women in society

The General Assembly,

Reaffirming the obligations of all States to promote and protect human rights and fundamental freedoms as stated in the Charter of the United Nations, and emphasizing also the obligations contained in human rights instruments, in particular the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women[1] and the Optional Protocol thereto,[2]

Recalling General Assembly resolution 44/76 of 8 December 1989 on elderly women, Economic and Social Council resolutions 1982/23 of 4 May 1982 on elderly women and the World Assembly on Ageing and 1986/26 of 23 May 1986 and 1989/38 of 24 May 1989 on elderly women, and Commission on the Status of Women resolution 36/4 of 20 March 1992 on the integration of elderly women into development,[3]

Recalling also the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century"[4] and the Beijing Declaration[5] and Platform for Action,[6] especially their provisions regarding older women,

Welcoming the convening of the Second World Assembly on Ageing to be held in Madrid in April 2002,

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[1] Resolution 34/180, annex.
[2] Resolution 54/4, annex.
[3] See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1992, Supplement No. 4* (E/1992/24 and Add.1-3), chap. I, sect. C.
[4] See resolutions S-23/2 and S-23/3.
[5] *Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, 4-15 September 1995* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.IV.13), chap. I, resolution 1, annex I.
[6] Ibid., annex II.

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Aware that women constitute the majority of older population in all regions of the world and represent an important human resource, whose contribution to society has not been fully recognized,

Recognizing the increasing role of older women in taking the responsibility of providing care and assistance to victims of human immunodeficiency virus/acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (HIV/AIDS) in various regions of the world, particularly in developing countries,

Affirming the dual challenges of ageing and disability, and that older persons have specific health needs and that, with the increase in life expectancy and the growing number of older women, their health concerns require particular attention and further research,

Aware that few statistics are available on the situation of older women and recognizing the importance of data, including data disaggregated by age and sex, as an essential element of planning and policy evaluations,

Recognizing that women of all ages, in particular older women, continue to suffer from discrimination and lack of opportunity,

Emphasizing that Governments bear the primary responsibility for creating an enabling environment for the economic and social development of their citizens, and noting with appreciation the valuable contributions of civil society, including non-governmental organizations, in calling attention to the specific needs of older women,

1. *Stresses* the importance of mainstreaming a gender perspective, taking into account the needs of older women, in policy and planning processes at all levels;

2. *Also stresses* the need to eliminate discrimination on the basis of gender and age and assure women of all ages, equal rights and their full enjoyment;

3. *Urges* Governments and regional and international organizations, including the United Nations system in cooperation with civil society, including the non-governmental organizations concerned, to promote programmes for healthy active ageing that stress the independence, equality, participation and security of older women and undertake gender-specific research and programmes to address their needs;

4. *Emphasizes* the need for Governments and regional and international organizations, including the United Nations system and the international financial institutions, to develop and improve the collection, analysis and dissemination of data disaggregated by age and sex;

5. *Urges* Governments to take measures to enable all older women to be actively engaged in all aspects of life, as well as to assume a variety of roles in communities, public life and decision-making, and to develop and implement policies and programmes in cooperation with civil society, including the non-governmental organizations concerned, to ensure their full enjoyment of human rights and quality of life, as well as to address their needs, with a view to contributing to the realization of a society for all ages;

6. *Invites* Governments, the United Nations system and international organizations to consider in their development planning, the increasing

responsibilities of older women in providing care and assistance to victims of human immunodeficiency virus/acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (HIV/AIDS);

7. *Invites* Governments and the United Nations system to give attention to the situation of older women in the context of the Second World Assembly on Ageing, to be held in Madrid in April 2002, including the integration of a gender perspective into the outcome document.